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**A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE 1978 MEDICAL ENTRANTS (TAMIL MEDIUM)
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA**

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This study was undertaken to evaluate the socio-economic and academic backgrounds, as well as the attitudes and interests of the Tamil medical students, who entered the University of Peradeniya in 1978. Questionnaires were returned by 29 (85%) of the 34 students who were contacted. Of the sample, 16 were from Jaffna, 8 from Colombo, 3 from Kandy and Batticaloa had 2. Almost 90% of them came from famous elitist public and private schools. Linked with the school background was the equally relevant family background. Majority of them came from higher-middle class or upper-class families. Twenty of them had entered at their 2nd GCE A/L attempt, and 8 in their first itself. The best grades were 3B and 1C, and the lowest grades were 3C and 1S. All except one, had received private tuition, when they prepared for A/L. Of the three main fields of students' interests, religion, politics and arts, it was evident that a student with very strong interests in one field tended not to be interested in the others. However, deep interests in religion and the arts often went together, but deep interests in religion and politics rarely did so.

The following topics were also discussed: opinion about the secondary education they received, career intentions, reading outside their field of study, and views on residential life in Peradeniya.

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